

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT O 01397 041300Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
/068 W

-----017620 041432Z /43

R 032230Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2385
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 1397

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, TD
SUBJECT: POLITICAL ATMOSPHERICS -- ELECTION RUMORS AND
OPPOSITION SHENANIGANS

REF: A) PORT OF SPAIN 1233; B) PORT OF SPAIN 1291

1. THERE HAS BEEN SOMETHING OF A LULL IN TRINIDAD'S
POLITICAL LIFE IN RECENT DAYS, WITH SUCH RELATIVELY MINOR
ISSUES AS REVISIONS TO THE MOTOR VEHICLES AND DRIVER LICENSING
LEGISLATION TAKING MUCH OF PARLIAMENT'S AND THE
PUBLIC'S ATTENTION. THE POSSIBILITY OF A SNAP ELECTION,
HOWEVER, REMAINS MUCH ON PEOPLE'S MINDS. "SUNDAY PUNCH"
IS STICKING TO ITS PREDICTION THAT JUNE 12 WILL BE ELECTION
DAY (REF B) AND HAS EVEN PUBLISHED THE NAMES OF THOSE WHOM IT
CLAIMS HAVE BEEN TABBED BY THE PNM TO CONTEST A NUMBER OF
SEATS, INCLUDING THOSE CURRENTLY HELD BY THE HAPLESS
"MILLSTONES." ON THE OTHER HAND, "EXPRESS" AND "NATIONAL
TARGET" HAVE BEEN TAKING THE LINE THAT THE ELECTION TALK
IS MERELY BLUFF ON THE PART OF PM WILLIAMS AND THAT THE
PNM IS NOT READY FOR AND WOULD HAVE LITTLE TO GAIN FROM
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NEW ELECTIONS. WHILE THOSE WHO MAY KNOW WHAT WILLIAMS
HAS IN MIND ARE NOT TALKING, SEVERAL WELL-INFORMED
EMBASSY SOURCES MAINTAIN THAT NEW ELECTIONS REMAIN
LIKELY, IF NOT IN JUNE THEN PROBABLY IN THE AUTUMN.

2. MEANWHILE, THE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION PICTURE
REMAINS CONFUSED. FOLLOWING LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION,

BASDEO PANDAY'S, SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-FLOOR-CROSSING AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION IN MID-APRIL (REF A), SEVEN OF THE TWELVE OPPOSITION MPS INFORMED PRESIDENT CLARKE THAT THEY OPPOSED PANDAY AS LEADER. SINCE THE SEVERAL HAVE NOT YET AGREED ON A REPLACEMENT FOR PANDAY, HE RETAINS HIS TENUOUS GRIP ON THAT POSITION (THE CONSTITUTION PROVIDES THAT THE PRESIDENT SHALL APPOINT AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION THAT MP WHO, IN HIS JUDGMENT, CAN BEST COMMAND THE SUPPORT OF THE GREATEST NUMBER OF OPPOSITION MPS). NEVERTHELESS, IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT AT LEAST SIX OF THE ANTI-PANDAY OPPOSITION MPS WILL AGREE SOON ON A CANDIDATE TO REPLACE HIM, THUS RESULTING IN THE APPOINTMENT OF NEW OPPOSITION SENATORS, INCLUDING POSSIBLY TWO TOBAGONIANS AS A SOP TO DAC MPS ROBINSON AND MURRAY, AND CARRYING THE GAME OF LEADER-OF-THE-OPPOSITION MUSICAL CHAIRS ONE RIDICULOUS STEP FURTHER.
FOX

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION FORECASTS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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From: PORT OF SPAIN
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780597/aaaadeyc.tel
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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